

Hood Canal Coordinating Council Lead Entity Technical Advisory Group Meeting Notes

June 21, 2010

Island Lake Community Room

Attendees:

- *Richard Brocksmith-Hood Canal Coordinating Council (HCCC)
Heidi Huber- Hood Canal Coordinating Council (HCCC)
- *Luke Cherney- Hood Canal Coordinating Council (HCCC)
- *Dan Hannafious- Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement Group (HCSEG)
- *Peter Bahls-Northwest Watershed Institute (NWI)
Rebecca Benjamin- North Olympic Salmon Coalition (NOSC)
- *Carrie Cook Tabor-US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFW)
- *Micah Wait- Wild Fish Conservancy (WFC)
- *Doris Small-WA Dept of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW)
Michael Blanton- WA Dept of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW)
Vern Rutter-HPLC Chair
(*TAG Member)

Purpose: To review final project applications, evaluate their technical merits, and determine a final, technically-ranked project list to be forwarded to the Habitat Project List Committee for their review.

Available Funding: \$1,195,165 to \$1,327,952 (if SRFB increases state award to \$20M)

Note: *The following meeting notes are in draft form and represent a summary of the conversations that took place. Direct quotes were not captured, therefore the statements below may not fully represent the views or opinions of the individuals in attendance.*

Announcements: Kilisut Harbor/Oak Bay Reconnection was pulled from consideration by the project sponsor (they hope to resubmit next year). Now we are down to 13 projects. The citizen's committee (HPLC) has been expanded this year. Vern Rutter will serve as the HPLC chair.

Conflict of interest discussion, TAG members stated which projects they *didn't* score:

Luke Cherney- Brushplant Reach Restoration , Snow/Salmon Riparian Dan Hannafious- HCSEG sponsored projects, Peter Bahls- NWI sponsored projects, Richard Brocksmith- Brushplant Reach Restoration, Dosewallips Riparian Corridor Acq., Mark McHenry (not present)- Dosewallips ELJs, Micah Wait- WFC sponsored projects(Dosewallips ELJs), Carrie Cook-Tabor- scored all, Doris Small- scored all.

Review Process for Normalizing/ Summarizing Technical Scores:

Should we improve the pre-scoring process? Currently the "Fit to Strategy" score is based on the domain. Domain doesn't count steelhead populations. How do we incorporate everyone's feedback, look at the priorities within the domains?

Micah: have there been advances in the science examining nearshore fish use in Hood Canal? Seems that projects are getting penalized because of lack of fish population/habitat information. We need to fund a (summer chum) nearshore study.

Richard: Right now nearshore projects with any saltmarsh habitat automatically get 25 points.

Peter: formally requests a meeting before December to look over the scoring criteria.

Richard: HCCC will have workshops with stakeholders to tee up the science of how the nearshore supports summer chum salmon and possibly other salmon as well, and then determine subsequent to that how we modify lead entity technical criteria to reflect recovery plan updates.

General comment: No tribal members were involved with scoring projects this round, though Richard responded that Skokomish tribal staff have been working with project sponsors and the lead entity but were not able to attend this particular meeting given tribal council overlap.

Richard: Should Tahuya, Big Beef, Chimacum be a higher priority given their reintroduction of summer chum? This will be a central question of this year's effort to update the summer chum salmon plan

Peter: Asked Richard if he looked at other's scores before he voted?

Richard: I complete my scoring first, then compile the scores I receive. It is done independently.

Rebecca: As an example, NOPL has someone who isn't involved in project ranking compile the scores to prevent tinkering.

Luke: the check and balance is the meeting today where we have the opportunity to discuss and rearrange the initial list if we feel it is necessary.

Carrie: maybe a non-scoring person should be summarizing the scores. Likes the idea of looking at Nearshore, summer chum updates/steelhead data before next year's process begins.

Richard: We can sit right here in this meeting and everyone can review the scores they provided in the excel sheet, the normalization of those scores, the summary sheet, and the outcomes if that would help provide the check in the process that Peter thinks is needed.

Micah: Is Nearshore fish use identified as a gap in any of the plans?

TAG should meet to discuss these issues, quarterly?

Dan: this might bring more people to the table

Review of Interim Results:

Vern, does the TAG take into account a good stopping place for the funds? Rescoping components of the projects to free up money for other projects.

Peter: do you have the overall raw scores? How much influence does the prescore have on this ranking?

Richard: The "prescore" or fit to strategy score is a determinative factor as it should be, but you can overcome the fit to strategy score if the project is scored high enough in other areas of benefit and certainty. Richard said he would facilitate the group having this discussion (post summer chum salmon plan update process). He continued with his personal perspective that we should put more emphasis on the higher priority areas to continue to drive more projects and effort into high priority areas. Unfortunately right now any nearshore with saltmarsh ranks as high as Big Beef, Tahuya, Chimacum spawning reaches, which is not appropriate.

Luke: I propose we examine the two highest ranking projects and if we all agree they belong there, move on to discussing the other projects. Agreed.

Peter: Lets keep in mind projects that need to happen this year. Agreed.

Group Evaluation of Individual Projects from Top to Bottom:

Snow Creek Delta Cone and Estuary Design

Richard: costs associated with project management and administration seem high (greater than 30%)

Micah: I don't think admin can be a single line item? *Rebecca:* I can provide more detail.

Changes in PRISM have created variability in how people submit budget information.

Micah: The TAG group could create standardized forms

Richard: in the past there have been caps on admin and design costs. We need to keep an eye on design only projects and how money is being used vs design/build projects, because there is a possibility that we'll end up spending significantly more money on administration than we did in the past.

Peter: I have a problem with Delta cone removal projects. Sounds like a good theory but what is the science that backs it up? I can see removing fill/levees. I would recommend that fluvial geomorphologists take an independent look at the value of removing delta cones.

Micah: we don't see delta cone removal projects anywhere else in Puget sound

Rebecca: this is potentially spoils from historical dredging, I am seeing conversion to upland (loss of saltmarsh) because of tidal changes.

Peter: is there still a plan to connect snow and salmon creeks?

Rebecca: Richard thinks it should be examined, but 101 bridge may not be able to handle water from combined creeks. Local project sponsors are not ready to take on this large of a project. Challenging to remove the weir, get landowner permission, etc.

Dan: Need to strike a balance btwn historic and current conditions. Is 1800 sheet always the best?

Rebecca: we do have summer chum in snow creek. Channel networks have very little connectivity to snow creek, fish are getting pushed straight into discovery bay.

Micah: what is impeding that process? *Richard:* fill, levees,

Rebecca: we'd like to do as little work in the existing saltmarsh as possible. Pat McCullough has worked on the design.

Micah: might be nice to have a geomorphologist's opinion

Carrie: We funded L Quilcene delta cone removal, what was the technical reception to that project? Are we going to wait and see how this performs?

Richard: we haven't received much feedback, but what we have has been positive. Would be nice to track the previous delta cone removal project more than we are able to do now and for a longer period of time. After walking the site we thought we should just remove the main stressors vs "shoot the moon" design in Snow Creek.

Luke: Agree we don't need to turn the clock back to pre-contact. Is delta cone the correct title for this project? It is less invasive than little Quilcene delta cone removal. Just shaving off fill.

***Rebecca:* What I'm hearing is you'd like us to focus on removing spoils and fill, minimize work in the saltmarsh, involve a geomorphologist in the design process.**

Richard: I'm a little hesitant about the sequencing of restoration in this area. Also the budget seems a bit high.

Surrounding landowner discussion (pflueger, seakota). No buildings on left bank (seakota). Pflueger acquisition is in the works.

Micah: recommends putting out an RFP

Richard: should take less than 18 months to complete the design

Peter: Can this project wait? *Rebecca:* USFWS is ready to entertain a proposal now (coastal wetlands grant) and Carrie said she heard good things about the project in the USFWS office

Salmon/Snow creek Riparian Project

Carrie: I had this lower on the list because the benefits to salmon didn't seem as high

Peter: Can you get CREP funding for this?

No, CREP cannot be used for state land. Property was purchased for restoration and still needs planting. Would combining Snow and Salmon Creeks affect this site?

Richard: maybe. But is it worth stopping? Property was purchased with salmon money, do we want it to go to weeds?

Why combine the two streams? *Richard:* The two streams were disconnected over 100 years ago, flooding/stranding issues, sediment budgets, lack of complexity due to ditching, connectivity issues.

Rebecca: fish are in the creek, just not doing well

Micah: In other areas they disc fields and let cottonwood regenerate and try to shade out reed canary grass, blackberry. That may be a cheaper path forward in some locations.

Big Quilcene Delta Cone Removal Design

Richard: sequencing question, have we learned from L. Quilcene delta cone removal project? There is lots of work being done in the lower river, and a very large project coming in the future around longer bridge, so I hope it connects well with delta cone work.

Can we wait and see if all the surrounding properties come into alignment before moving forward with this project?

This project could/does include levee removal not just delta cone removal design

Peter: Think this project should wait until Newman property is purchased

Doris: I'm concerned about the shellfish folks, project is on public land for shellfishing. I would consider deferring this project.

Do we know where the water is going to go after levees are removed? Need to own Newman property.

Vern: what's the harm in leaving the island?

Richard: If you leave gravel, it will grow upland vegetation.

Luke: project has benefits for salmon, but needs to take into consideration sequencing issues. I don't think it has to move forward this year.

Richard: HCSEG is the sponsor for both the acquisition and design projects, so they will know what's going on with the Newman purchase before moving forward with the design, so in that sense it will be well sequenced by default if we move forward with both.

Can SRFB /coastal wetland grant be used for Newman property?

Dosewallips ELJ

Micah: took out upper site from proposal. Community support for lower site hasn't been determined. Project will fund construction and NEPA permits of the larger 6-reach project throughout forest service lands. USFS is happy about areas where flow changes will divert water away from the road.

Luke: seems like we need more landowner outreach

Micah: state parks is donating 80 trees, need to purchase 34 logs/jam for 4 jams. 100 year design not 200, need to change that info in HWS. Expensive because we are installing jams in the full thalweg of the river for maximum contact and habitat benefits.

Richard: Next year funding will be needed to transfer trees from the road washout rebuild into stream jams. If washout rebuild doesn't happen we'd have to buy wood.

This project cost includes paying for removal of donated USFS trees. Wanted to design jams without cables and riprap cores

Luke: what is the critical part of doing this project this year? For fish, sooner the better, given the critical nature of this Chinook stock.

Richard: Salmon treaty funds need to be spent by 2012, need to align with NEPA (25,000 dollars). Want good habitat ready for supplemented fish that may be arriving in coming years.

Richard: I have issue with the placement of the jams, pins the river too close to the bank etc. think we need to fund but look closely at designs and jam placement.

Micah: there are ways to tweak the design.

Peter: concerned about lack of monitoring on these jam projects.

Knotweed Control & Riparian Enhancement - No comments

Skokomish General Investigation

Has funding through Oct of 2011 for 10% design and begin 35%. Need funding to complete Environmental Impact Statement and bring the preferred alternatives to 35% design. Lowered original request, Tacoma power may pay half....

Richard walked through HWS ppt. \$600,000 of SRFB money was spent on fish research, report will be out in August. Would like the Chinook recovery plan to drive selection of the projects, not driven just by flooding/ agriculture issues. Project identification could start as early as August.

Dan: hesitant to move this forward, without everything aligned

Carrie: if they don't get funding it would have to be shelved for 4 months, you risk losing project manager and setting the project way back longer than 4 months.

Luke: this is the 4th request for SRFB money, what is the product?

Richard: I do see a positive difference in how it is being handled this year. Cannot count on PSAR funds for next year, so don't assume we'll have any easier time funding next year. Past project money has been spent, just hasn't been billed (so it's sitting at RCO)

Condition: if the preliminary projects identified in December aren't clearly aligned with the Chinook salmon recovery plan, then we think it should be pulled from project funding consideration.

Brush Plant Road Reach Restoration

Peter: why was this pre-scored 35?

Richard: L. Quilcene is domain 1 throughout the watershed, unless project doesn't affect life history processes below. Large woody debris placement and grade control? One of the two grade controls was dropped from the preliminary concept, but even that is under consideration as we move to more solid designs.

Micah: What were the results from the L. Quilcene lower wood placement?

Peter: I think there is overkill on the initial design concepts, is big log jam placement and excavation needed?

Richard: Scaled appropriately for size of stream and has to be moderate because of houses in the floodplain, so this isn't a big log jam and excavation project.

Peter: landowner consent is still needed from several individuals, how does that change things?

Richard: Project isn't viable without Worthington's consent, which is the only landowner that hasn't been contacted yet. Project would be pulled without landowner's approval by August.

Lower Tahuha LWD

Landowner consent??? Landowner acknowledgment forms are needed for the new site. Design by Tom Smayda. Sponsor has chosen a new location within the summer chum spawning reach and has chosen larger number of smaller jams, vs fewer larger jams.

Tarboo Bay Acquisition and Restoration

Peter: without funding this year NWI may have to sell this property.

Twanoh State Park Soft Shore Design

HWY 106 culvert has been pulled, still exists in HWS and several places in the materials. John was unsure where to draw the restoration line upstream.

Frigid Creek Fish Passage Restoration Design

Changed the scope from design/build of two culverts to design for one culvert. Big question is, are there fish up there or not (yes cutthroat, steelhead/coho?) No natural barriers downstream, good habitat. Would be within the anadromous reach, but marginally.

Questions Related to Entire List:

Big Quilcene Delta Cone Removal Design- Should this project be deferred to next year due to sequencing and property issues? Newman acquisition is likely, but uncertain (if land can't be acquired TAG participants would likely score the project lower). Shellfish issues. Lack of understanding of how delta cone removal will affect tidal processes. Not explicit on the 3yr work plan, but fits with intent and goals, and is documented in several other plans. Does it matter if we wait a year?

Richard: HCSEG is the sponsor for the Newman acquisition and the delta cone design, they would make sure things don't happen out of sync. However, another reason to wait is to address last remaining upstream landowner issue so this can be tied to the Linger Longer design.

Snow creek delta cone design: Lingering questions about the budget, sequencing, and objectives.

There is definite value in doing spoil removal even if snow/salmon creeks are eventually combined.

Peter: do you need full design or just 20%, you could do full design but narrow the scope, or do \$50,000 for partial design.

***Rebecca:* will address errors in HWS, will address rescope questions, and will tighten up the budget and cut at least \$10,000 so projects can be funded further down the list.**

Dose Log Jams: Can this project be deferred? Yes, but logs would be sitting which is a pain/financial cost logistically and could compromise the wood (could be stolen, become dry/corky). Could this be done in several phases? No, we want to minimize damage to floodplain. Could the NEPA part be funded and nothing else? Yes, but we want to get this project moving. NEPA will take place in 2011, construction in 2012. The broader question is why defer if this is the most valuable Chinook project out there and we'd be deferring to fund projects further down the list with potentially less benefit to salmon?

Proposed Changes to Project Rankings and Finalize Technically-Ranked Project List

Action: Leave Big Quilcene Delta Cone Removal Design on the list, but move lower down so it is out of both the funding and alternate funding ranges. Ask the sponsor to defer the project until a later date when the landownership in the estuary and linger longer reaches are addressed.

Action: Move the Skokomish General Investigation up one spot above knotweed so it is just inside the funding range.

Condition: List of potential projects released in December must be consistent with the Chinook salmon recovery plan (be good for fish) or we will not allow salmon funds to be used for this project.

Action: Request that each of the highest ranked projects decrease SRFB request by \$10,000 (if the project remains viable) to ensure that we can fully fund through the knotweed project. Preliminarily, this looks like it would include the Dosewallips Riparian Acquisition, Snow Creek Delta Cone, to some degree Salmon and Snow Creek Riparian, Dosewallips Engineered Log Jams, and Knotweed.

Final TAG Ranked List:

1. Dosewallips Riparian Corridor Acquisition
2. Big Quilcene Estuary Acquisition Planning
3. Snow Creek Delta Cone and Estuary Design
4. Salmon and Snow Creek Riparian Project

5. Dosewallips Engineered Log Jams
6. Skokomish General Investigation
7. Knotweed Control & Riparian Enhancement Year 3
8. Brush Plant Road Reach Restoration
9. Lower Tahuya LWD
10. Tarboo Bay Acquisition and Restoration
11. Big Quilcene Delta Cone Removal Design
12. Twanoh State Park Soft Shore Design
13. Frigid Creek Fish Passage Restoration Design